"That the Bill be returned."

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

RE. DEMAND FOR STATEMENT ON IRAQ ISSUE

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE (West Bengal) : Madam, before we take up other issues, I would like to draw the attention of the House, through you, to the position that though we discussed the Iraq issue on a Private Member's Resolution on Friday, it is surprising that when things are developing in a very queer way, a very powerful nation is expressing its views that whatever be the consequences of the U.N. Security Council's resolution, it would go by its own will and that it would not accept any other forum's directive. A deadline is also being fixed by it now. I would like the Government of India, at the highest-level to make a statement. Without having any reflection on the Foreign Minister's observation. Is this not an occasion to take the Parliament - either Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha - into confidence when the Parliament is in Session? When the Parliament is in Session, should the Prime Minister not open his lips? Should the Prime Minister not express his concern, or the concern of the Government? What we are finding is, various views are coming and, sometimes, different signals are given. Therefore, I would like to have ascertained the position from the highest in the Government, the Prime Minister. He must express the position of the Government of India. He must explain the concern of the people of this country. We can't carry on the cross of others. We have seen what happened after the battle in 1990; what happened after Kuwait; and how much it affected our economy. Our balance of payments situation had to face a major crisis. Therefore, on this issue, most respectfully I would say, we would like to know from the Government, when the Prime Minister is going to make a statement. I am not concerned with whatever assurances the Foreign Minister might have given on the issue, in a Private Members' Resolution. The Prime Minister, the highest in the Government, must make his observation quite clear. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री सुरेश पचौरी (मध्य प्रदेश) : मैडम, यह बहुत गंभीर मामला है। इस पर स्वयं प्रधानमंत्री जी को अपना वक्तव्य देना चाहिए। अगर इतने गंभीर मामले में स्वयं प्रधानमंत्री वक्तव्य न दें, और कोई वक्तव्य दे तो हम यह मानकर चलेंगे कि सरकार इसको गंभीरता से नहीं ले रही है। ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी (पश्चिमी बंगाल) : उपसभापति महोदया, यह इतना गंभीर मामला है। इस पर कब प्रधानमंत्री जी बयान देंगे, वे कब सदन को विश्वास में लेंगे? कम से कम इसके बारे में जानकारी तो हो जानी चाहिए। ...(व्यवधान)... मैडम, संसदीय मंत्री ने क्या कहा है।

उपसभापति : वे कुछ बोलना चाहती थीं, लेकिन वे आपका आदर करके बैठ गईं। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी : वे क्या कहना चाहती हैं, हम उन्हें सुनना चाहते हैं ।

उपसभापति : आप बैठेंगी तो मैं उनसे कहूंगी कि वे कुछ कहें ।

स्वास्थ्य और परिवार कल्याण मंत्री और संसदीय कार्य मंत्री (श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज) : उपसभापति महोदया, माननीय सांसद प्रणब मुखर्जी इस सदन के बहुत वरिष्ठ सांसद हैं और एक मुख्य विपक्षी दल के मुख्य सचेतक भी हैं। मुझे उनकी बात सुनकर बहुत कष्ट हुआ । उन्होंने स्वयं ने स्वीकार किया कि अभी शुक्रवार को - जो कि पिछले सप्ताह का आखिरी दिन था, इस सत्र का - राज्य सभा में एक प्राइवेट मैंबर्स रैज़ोल्यूशन पर पूरे ढाई घंटे चर्चा हुई । बाकायदा विदेश मंत्री ने इस पर जवाब दिया। उनका कहना बिल्कुल सही है कि डैवलपमेंट्स और घटनाक्रम इतनी तेजी से चल रहा है कि उसमें कहीं न कहीं दोनों सदनों की भावना जरूर आनी चाहिए । प्रणब दा को इस बात की जानकारी जरूर होगी कि आज ही, जो सदन का इस सप्ताह का पहला दिन है, प्रधान मंत्री जी ने अपने आग्रह पर सर्वदलीय बैठक बुलाई है जो अभी चार घंटे बाद होने वाली है । 6 बजे वह सर्वदलीय बैठक इसी परिसर में ऊपर 53 नम्बर कमरे में होगी । सभी विपक्षी दलों के नेताओं को उन्होंने बुलाया है । केवल कॉन्फीडेंस में लेने की बात नहीं है बल्कि उनके विचारों को भी सुनकर जो मत बनेगा, वह सदन में रखा जाएगा । सर्वदलीय बैठक तुरंत बुला लेना और जो शुक्रवार की चर्चा है, उससे भी पहले उन्होंने यह तय कर दिया था - आप लोगों को शुक्र और शनिवार को पत्र मिल गये होंगे । केवल यही नहीं सात तारीख को जब हमने सर्वदलीय बैठक बुलायी थी, उसी में उन्होंने सूचना दे दी थी कि दस तारीख को शाम को 6 बजे केवल इराक के घटनाक्रम पर चर्चा करने के लिए प्रधानमंत्री जी ने बैठक बुलायी है । उसके बाद यह कहना कि प्रधानमंत्री सदन को विश्वास में नहीं ले रहे हैं, सरकार कोई वक्तव्य नहीं दे रही है, वाकई बहुत ही कष्टदायक और दुखदायक बात है लेकिन मैं यह कहना चाहती हूं कि आज शाम को 6 बजे बैठक हो रही है जहां आप सबको अपनी बात रखने का मौका मिलेगा और उसके बाद इस देश का जो मानस बनेगा, उसको कहकर हम सदन को विश्वास में लेंगे ।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : You wanted to say something. प्रधान जी, आप खड़े हुए थे ।

श्री सतीश प्रधान (महाराष्ट्र) : महोदया, आज जो शॉर्ट ड्यूरेशन डिसकशन के लिए नोटिस दिया गया है, उसी विषय पर मैं आपका और सदन का ध्यान आकर्षित करना चाहता हूं ।

आदरणीय सभापति जी ने सभी एमपीलैड्स फंड्स के बारे में विचार-विमर्श करने के लिए, उसका ठीक ढंग से काम चल रहा है या नहीं, इस पर ध्यान देने के लिए ....

श्री रमा शंकर कौशिक : महोदया, क्या डिसकशन शुरू हो गया है ?

उपसभापति : नहीं, वे कुछ और कह रहे हैं । मैं उन्हें सुन लूं क्योंकि I have to call for the discussion ...*(Interruptions)*... I have not started it. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री सतीश प्रधान : इन सब बातों को देखने के लिए कमेटी अप्वाइंट हुई है और हमारे यहां इस विषय पर दो दिन बहस हुई । मेरा कहने का मतलब है कि अभी यहां चर्चा करने से पहले कमेटी उस विषय पर पूरा ध्यान दे और विचार करने के बाद उस विषय पर अपनी रिपोर्ट दे । उसके बाद उस रिपोर्ट पर इस सदन में चर्चा हो । यदि इस ढंग से चर्चा होगी तो उससे अच्छा रिज़ल्ट निकलेगा । अभी ऐसे ही चर्चा करने से कोई लाभ नहीं होगा क्योंकि हमारे सामने अभी कुछ भी नहीं है । सिर्फ अखबार में जो कुछ छप गया या टी.वी. पर जो कुछ बताया गया, उसी पर यहां चर्चा करना उतना मुनासिब नहीं होगा । इसीलिए मेरी प्रार्थना है कि इस चर्चा को अभी यहां करने के बजाय इस विषय को कमेटी को सौंप दिया जाए और कमेटी इस विषय पर गौर करे । फिर कमेटी की रिपोर्ट आने पर इस पर चर्चा की जाए ।

प्रो0 राम देव भंडारी (बिहार) : महोदया, एक कैबीनेट मंत्री को बहुत अनुभव है, टेप कांड का । उन्हीं की अध्यक्षता में बना दी जाए । ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी : मैडम, यह नहीं हो सकता है । ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्री रमा शंकर कौशिक : मैडम, चेयरमैन साहब के चैंबर में ये स्वयं मौजूद थे । अगर ऐसी बात थी तो इन्हें उसी वक्त यह बात कहनी चाहिए थी जब यह तय हो रहा था कि आज इस पर चर्चा होगी । तब प्रधान जी वहां मौजूद थे । सबकी राय से ही यह तय हुआ था कि इसको दस तारीख को लिया जाएगा ।

श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी : मैडम, सभापति महोदय ने अनुमति दे दी है तो फिर नये सिरे से विवाद पैदा करने की क्या जरूरत है ? मैं समझती हूं कि इसे शुरु कर देना चाहिए। ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्रीमती सरोज दुबे : मैडम, इस पर डिबेट होनी चाहिए ।

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN (Tamil Nadu) : Madam, the Iraq issue is a very serious one. It is true that the Prime Minister has called a meeting of the all parties Leaders today. That is a different matter. This issue has to

be discussed in this House because it is a very serious one. Thousands of Indians are living in Gulf countries. They are employed there as workers. If a war breaks out, what will happen to their life and security? Thousands of people are living in Gulf countries. It is a very serious matter. What plan does the Central Government have to evacuate, to save these workers? This has to be discussed. This is a very serious issue. Therefore, we should take up this issue first and discuss it in this House.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI (Tamil Nadu) : Madam, the Iraq issue is a burning issue which is disturbing the minds of the whole of India. Iraq issue is a very serious issue. The other day - last Friday - we had dealt with this issue. Today, there is an all-party meeting at 6 o' clock. But, the issue before us is a very urgent one. So, according to the information provided by the USA, unless and otherwise there is a change in the regime, there is going to be a war. Therefore, what we have to see is, the Indians, particularly, who are hailing from South - Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Andhra Pradsh - are to be evacuated safely since...*(Interruptions)*... Most of the people who have gone from South to Gulf countries are mainly doing the manual work. The important point is that the people working in the Gulf countries are not working there as IT professionals, but are working as manual workers. They are not IT professionals. The people who have gone to Western countries are all IT professionals. But, here, in the Gulf countries, most of the people are engaged in manual works. So, they, themselves, cannot afford to pay money and come back by flight to India. Therefore, the Government of India should come forward and take initiatives to see that Indians, working in Iraq and in other adjoining countries, are safe and secure. The Government should also take steps to bring the people, who are in danger, back to India. This is a very important issue. Hence, this issue has to be discussed first. Thank you.

DR. V. MAITREYAN (Tamil Nadu) : Madam, people from South, particularly from Tamil Nadu, are repeatedly assaulted by various groups. Last week we had discussed about Tamil Nadu fishermen being attacked by the Sri Lankan army. Again, there is a big threat to the lakhs and lakhs of South Indian Tamils, who have gone to the Middle East. What assurance or guarantee is the Government of India giving for the safety of these people? ...*(Interruptions)*... मैडम, छः बजे की मीटिंग में चाहे कुछ भी हो लेकिन हाउस मे इसकी कुछ बात तो होनी चाहिए।

SHRI JIBON ROY (West Bengal) : Madam, this is the concern of the entire House..*(Interruptions)*...

प्रो0 रामबक्ष सिंह वर्मा (उत्तर प्रदेश) : उपसभापति महोदया, जब पार्लियामेंटरी अफेयर्स मिनिस्टर ने अभी यहां पर अपनी बात रख दी है तो बार-बार यह मुद्दा उठाने की क्या आवश्यकता है? ....**(व्यवधान)**....

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI : Madam, there is also a problem in Malaysia..*(Interruptions)*...

DR. V. MAITREYAN : We were beaten in Sri Lanka. We were beaten in Malaysia..*(Interruptions)*... We are going to be beaten in the Middle East..*(Interruptions)*... Hence, the Government must come out with a clear-cut reply..*(Interruptions)*... Let us have a discussion and let the Government reply to the House as to what it wishes to do because we are the affected party..*(Interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Now, we have the Short Duration Discussion. We will go ahead with this. Then, I feel, four hours is too long a time. The other day, we had already discussed this issue ..*(Interruptions)*... If the House so agrees, we can finish it off in two-and-a-hours..*(Interruptions)*... Because we have got some other business before us.

SHRI N. JOTHI (Tamil Nadu) : Madam, there are lot of developments between Friday and today..*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL (Bihar) : Madam, we have agreed to discuss it for four hours..*(Interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Yes. You have agreed. But, there are hardly any names before me on this..*(Interruptions)*... I remember, in the morning, we had the Customs Tariff (Amendment) Bill, 2003, which was totally collapsed because there were only a few Members participated in that discussion..*(Interruptions)*... We had allotted two hours for that Bill. ..*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL : Madam, let us start the Short Duration Discussion..*(Interruptions)*... This would not collapse..*(Interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Then, we have to take up the Government Resolutions..*(Interruptions)*... There are three Resolutions. The Home Minister has to come..*(Interruptions)*... If the House so agrees, I do not mind in taking four hours..*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL : Madam, four hours has been allotted for this Short Duration Discussion..*(Interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : I do not have many names before me..*(Interruptions)*...Who will speak for four hours?..*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI N. JOTHI : Madam, lakhs and lakhs of Indians employed in Iraq..*(Interruptions)*...What steps the Government of India is taking to rescue them?..*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI : Let the Government react. ..*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI C.P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU (Pondicherry) : Madam, foreign exchange worth of Rs. 28,000 crores is being sent by the people working in Gulf countries annually..*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI N. JOTHI : So many developments have taken place since last Friday..*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI : Madam, people from Kerala and Tamil Nadu are much affected..*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI N. JOTHI : What action plan does the Government have for evacuating those people?..*(Interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I know that..*(Interruptions)*...The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs Minister has just now informed the House that there is an all-party meeting at 6 o' clock..*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN : Madam, this is a very serious issue. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Tomorrow, either the Prime Minister or the Foreign Minister, whoever is slated to come will inform the House, will come...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI : What is the present situation in Iraq?...*(Interruptions)*...Indians are, actually, suffering there...*(Interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : I cannot tell you...*(Interruptions)*...I want to take up the Short Duration Discussion...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI : Madam, we want to hear the latest situation from the Government...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI N. JOTHI: We cannot be so mechanical...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. V. MAITREYAN : The Leader of the House is not here to reply. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: This is an issue about which whole India is concerned. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL : Madam, you are known as controlling the House very effectively. Why don't you go ahead with the matter? *(Interruptions)*

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI : This is a problem of Indians living there. ...*(Interruptions)*...

AN HON. MEMBER : Let the proceedings be conducted in chambers then. *(Interruptions)*

श्री सुरेश पचौरी : मैडम, जहां तक इराक और यूएस के संबंध में मसले की बात है, मैं आपके जरिए सरकार से अनुरोध करना चाहता हूं कि यह एक बहुत गंभीर मामला है। जब सारे सदस्य इसके प्रति चिंता जाहिर कर रहे हैं तो यह मसला और गंभीर बन जाता है कि इस पर प्राइम मिनिस्टर के अलावा और किसी का वक्तव्य देना नहीं बनता है। मैं सोचता हूं कि सारा सदन इस बात के लिए सहमत हो कि प्रधानमंत्री जी पहले उस मीटिंग का इंतजार करें, इससे

पहले यहां वक्तव्य दें तो बेहतर होगा। दूसरी बात यह है कि आज के लिस्ट आफ बिजिनेस में शोर्ट ड्यूरेशन पर डिसकसन एडमिटेड है । मैं चाहूंगा कि उस पर आप डिसकसन शुरु करें। ...(व्यवधान)... या तो प्रधानमंत्री जी वक्तव्य दें ...(व्यवधान)... उस पर डिसकसन कराइए। ...(व्यवधान)... हम खुद चिंतित हैं, यह सरकार चिंतित नहीं है। अगर सरकार चिंतित होती तो प्रधानमंत्री जी वक्तव्य देते। ...(व्यवधान)... महोदया, आप शार्ट ड्यूरेशन पर चर्चा कराइए। ...(व्यवधान)... जो एडमिटेड बिजिनेस है, उस पर चर्चा कराइए। ...(व्यवधान)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Let Manmohan Singhji also express his views. *(Interruptions)* Order please. ..*(Interruptions)*...

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (DR. MANMOHAN SINGH) : Madam, all of us are concerned about the grave situation in Iraq, the safety of Indian nationals, people of Indian origin, and all other related issues. This is not a partisan matter. All of us share this concern. We would like the Government to take the House into confidence. I think, the hon. Minister has effectively replied to that point. She said, "The Prime Minister is going to meet the leaders of various parties, and thereafter, he will come to the House." I think, the matter should be allowed to rest there.

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN : No; no. That is different, Madam. ..*(Interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : The Minister has replied. So, let the Minister come back to us, when she wants to make a statement on behalf of the Government. Then, we will take it up later. ..*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI : When is the Minister going to make a *suo motu* statement? ..*(Interruptions)*... Will she please ensure us? ..*(Interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Sushmaji, they want a *suo motu* statement from the hon. Prime Minister.

श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज : मैडम, जैसा मैंने अभी कहा है कि आज शाम को तय होगा तो मैं अभी कैसे कह सकती हूं कि *सुओ-मोटो* स्टेटमेंट होगा या क्या होगा? सर्वदलीय बैठक है, उसमें सभी नेता आएंगे तो उसमें से जो मत निकलेगा, क्या निकलेगा इसको मैं अभी से कैसे कह दूं?

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN : Madam, let us discuss this issue. *(Interruptions)* This is a very burning issue. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI PREMCHAND GUPTA (Bihar) : Would you be able to avoid the war by discussing the matter here? ...*(Interruptions)*... What is this? *(Interruptions)* When the whole House is sharing your view, then why are you making it an issue? ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JIBON ROY : The matter is more serious than you are thinking. You are reducing it to. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI PREMCHAND GUPTA : Yes, it is more serious. Don't reduce it. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JIBON ROY : The Prime Minister has called a meeting of all party. Let it be discussed there. We will demand of the Government that all the Indians should be brought from there. ...*(Interruptions)*... Now, let the motion be discussed. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI PREMCHAND GUPTA : Madam, this is not a question of South India or North India. They are all Indians. They are all our brothers and sisters. ...*(Interruptions)*... So, don't reduce this issue to a small matter. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI : I want to put the record straight. I am not reducing it. We said, "Indians, particularly hailing from the South." ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA : There are people from Rajasthan also. There are people from Bihar also. There are people from Punjab also. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI : People from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, who ever are there, they are all Indians. They are suffering. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Dr. Raja Ramanna wants to say something. *(Interruptions)* Now, shall we start the discussion? ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. RAJA RAMANNA (Nominated) : Madam, I am an Indian from the South. But I am surprised that one particular group is going to take charge of looking after all the other South Indians. This is too much. As mentioned earlier, we will unite together, and will face the problem as they come. Forget that we are South Indians or North Indians. I have been here long enough to know that all this can lead us to wrong conclusions. If we want unity. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Now, we will take up the Short Duration Discussion. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI : Madam, the demand made by us has been misunderstood. We didn't say, South Indians or North Indians. From Kashmir to Kanyakumari, all are Indians. The people, who are suffering in Iraq, whether South Indians or North Indians, are all Indians. Therefore, we wanted to put it on record that it should not be misunderstood.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : We agree that it is a matter concerning the Indians working in the Gulf; their safety and security. I am sure, the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs will convey the sentiments of all of you, and then, the Government will take a decision. The Prime Minister or any other Minister designated to do so, will come before the House and explain the situation.

Smt. Sushma Swarajji, what I really wanted to say, what they were saying is not what comes out of the all-party meeting. What they wanted to know is, what is the situation in Iraq, at the moment. ...*(Interruptions)*... They did not want to know what would come out of the discussion or what strategy would be discussed in the...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री प्रेम गुप्ता : मैडम, अब हो गया । सब समझ गए ।

उपसभापति : अभी नहीं समझे हैं । आप समझ गए होंगे, वे नहीं समझे । ...**(व्यवधान)**... Now, I want to have some peace in the House before we take up the Short Duration Discussion. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI : Madam, the fact is that families, whose relatives are there in Iraq, are worried. They are worried as to what

will happen to their husbands or sons. They are worried about them. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL : What do you want? ...*(Interruptions)*... You do not want that the Short Duration Discussion be taken up. ...*(Interruptions)*... If you want to continue with this...*(Interruptions)*... then, why didn't you make it clear to the hon. Chairman? ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Now, let us take up the Short Duration Discussion on alleged misuse of MPLADS arising out of the recent disclosures in the form of videotapes.

श्री सतीश प्रधान : मेरे प्रस्ताव का क्या हुआ ?

उपसभापति : आपका क्या प्रस्ताव था ।

श्री सतीश प्रधान : आपने जो सुझाव दिया था कि कमेटी के पास भेज देंगे ।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : I know there is a Committee, and the Committee should also look into this. We will examine it

---

SHORT DURATION DISCUSSION

Alleged Misuse of MPLADS Funds arising out of the recent disclosures in the form of video tapes

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL (Bihar) : Madam, I rise on behalf of my party to raise a discussion on alleged misuse of MPLADS arising out of the recent disclosures in the form of videotapes.

Madam, let me, at the outset, state that the purpose of the MPLADS was that in the hands of Legislators and in the hands of Members of Parliament there should be sufficient funds to carry on development activities in the State and in the various ...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Actually, it should not be, 'in the hands of'. ...*(Interruptions)*... Mr. Kapil Sibal, you are a lawyer. I am just